

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested.

Currently, claims 1-34 are pending in this application.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1-11 and 21-34 have been allowed.

The Office Action held that claims 17 and 18 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but held that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. By this Amendment, claims 17 and 18 have been rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of base claim 12. Claims 17 and 18 are thus allowable.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 12-16, 19 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 as allegedly being anticipated by Leahy et al. (US '045, hereinafter "Leahy"). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

For a reference to anticipate a claim, each element must be found, either expressly or under the principles of inherency, in the reference. Leahy fails to disclose each element required by independent claim 12 and its dependents. For example, Leahy fails to disclose "means for providing an instruction to obtain information about the status of a zone adjacent to the boundary before the avatar enters the zone adjacent to the boundary only when the likelihood of the avatar moving within the predetermined range of the boundary is above a threshold."

Leahy discloses a virtual world system in which a plurality of users can interact. The virtual world shows avatar(s) representing all the user(s) who are neighbor(s) of the

user viewing the virtual world. Each client machine operated by a user sends its current location, or changes in its current location, to a server providing the virtual world and receives updated position information of the other clients. This position information is processed so that each user sees the correct location of the other avatars. (See column 3, lines 17-29). The position of an avatar is thus needed for rendering the avatar in a correct place. Remote avatar position table 112 contains the current positions of “in range” avatars near another particular avatar. However, positioning is used for a “crowd control” function, which is needed in some cases to ensure that a client nor a user is overwhelmed by the crowds of avatars which may occur in a popular virtual world. The positioning information disclosed by Leahy is therefore not used to determine when the likelihood of an avatar moving within a predetermined range of a boundary is above a threshold. Leahy thus fails to disclose providing an instruction to obtain information about a status of a zone adjacent to a boundary before an avatar enters the zone adjacent to the boundary only when the likelihood of the avatar moving within the predetermined range of the boundary is above a threshold.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claims 12-16, 19 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. §102 in view of Leahy be withdrawn.

POWERS et al.
Application No. 09/743,898
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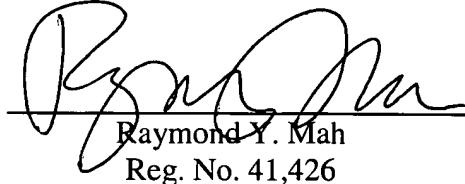
Conclusion:

Applicant believes that this entire application is in condition for allowance and respectfully requests a notice to this effect. If the Examiner has any questions or believes that an interview would further prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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